[12 cont.]

000
439 occupation. Even among the nomadic groups, however, meat, hides, and so forth are commonly traded for millet.

[222] Also, the Blacks like to have veldkost on their table, and the Bushmen, like our sponge and berry gatherers, use their knowledge to supply them and carry on petty trade with their veldkost, as well as with honey.

222
137 This is the reason that veldkost, which is either scarce or not very tasty, is not gathered at all any more; indeed, the knowledge of its presence is even disappearing. We must also not forget that the black shepherd boys long ago acquired the knowledge of the Bushmen by observing them. As a result, the number of those interested has naturally climbed sharply, and the veldkost plants have become rare. The following kinds are still regularly gathered:

222 /airoba (ombimbo) Sweetish, very starchy tubers, like large potatoes.
/érui (omauungă) Galls on the leaves of the omsati tree.
≠gan-i (esarata) Small fruit.
!Khui-i (oombi) Dates.
!Korob-ke (oompali) Bulbs at the roots of a liana.

251
439 Dried meat is made from kudu flesh, which in part is kept and in part sold.

278 [13] Arrow poison is made from the sap of a tree (Euphorbiacea), !Khores-Ke. The Ondonga themselves make no [439] arrow poison, but buy it from the Bushmen for one to two sh per 752 portion. There is no medicine against arrow poison. Deep incisions are made at the place where the arrow entered, and after blood has flowed freely from the wound, it is sucked. In the case of snakebite the same procedure is followed, and some arrow poison is placed on the wound (!!!).

278
609 Our Bushmen denied any knowledge of poisons added to food. Only the "evil Bushmen" in the east had such knowledge, they claimed. This statement scarcely deserves credence.

177 In clothing, dwellings, and weapons, as well as ornaments, not much that is original remains. The process of Bantuization is much further advanced in the material culture than in the spiritual culture. It is, after all, easier to part with clothing than with ideas.

[21 cont.]

157 them thought of asking a question about it. The Bushmen of today at least do not believe that any kind of magic is concealed [177] in the Europeans' machines. They learn to use European instruments fairly quickly; in particular, they soon become familiar with the rifle. Dornan reported that there was a large number of improvised rifles that the Bushmen had adapted. In a new environment, the Bushman is wholly self-possessed and coolly [648] observant. He is highly adaptable. The girls, of whom a number are kept by farmers as concubines, are quite skillful at [177] housekeeping. In Ovamboland they quickly adopt the living habits and economic activities of the Bantu. An Ongandjera Bushman acts as an instructor at the teacher's college in Oonipa. He owns a small kraal that is well-maintained in Ovambo fashion and, in addition, has built himself a round hut of tiles in which [648] he keeps his "library." They seldom stay long on the farms, but [147] probably in the main because the food does not agree with them.

609 The Bushmen are most distrustful of other people. Every armed person whom they encounter is regarded from the outset as an enemy. The Bushman is allowed to enter the regions of other tribes only if he is unarmed. Even along the edge of the farm zone the mutual distrust is so great that a Bushman who has been sent to a farm as a messenger dares not leave the road, which is regarded as a neutral zone, if another kin group has settled in the vicinity. If two armed Bushmen who are strangers approach each other, they disarm at first sight before they greet each other. When a Bushman comes to a village or to a farmhouse, he will put down his arms at a certain distance and sit down to wait patiently, if need be for hours, until he is questioned. A 186 609 distinct sense of race is not apparent. Everything that does not belong to one's own kin group is regarded as strange, even hostile, except when common persecution causes a sense of solidarity to spring up among all those who are persecuted. At the same time, they very clearly possess a kind of sense of humanity as a whole, that is, they do not believe that they are the only people, and they are convinced, for example, that the people of all races are received in the heavenly house. Their 602 conduct toward relatives is regulated by numerous customs, but in general it is formal and almost ceremonial, even toward the [593] wife and children. The Bushman is never importunate.
[157]

[21 cont.]

648 The Bushmen as a whole are despised by the other peoples, but in individual cases they are feared, and not least by the Whites. The Bushmen are familiar with this attitude and conduct themselves accordingly.

797 177 The Bushmen accept a foreign point of view only with great difficulty, if at all. The mission, accordingly, can show no noteworthy success among them. On the other hand, they 157 usually grasp the intentions of others more quickly than the ordinarily more superficial Blacks. Consequently, they give brief and precise answers to the questions put to them. When asked questions that they do not want to answer, they remain silent. At the same time, in dealings with them one should note that they tire very quickly when they have to do mental work, and then they will not answer further questions, not because they do not want to, but because they are too tired.

181 [574] 609 The Bushmen are not generous. Nevertheless, allowing a stranger to partake of a meal, as well as giving him some of the available water, is wholly matter-of-course with them. [431] They very rarely, however, give any of their personal belongings, weapons, ornaments, hides, and so forth, as presents. If they themselves receive presents, they are obviously delighted. 181 It is true that they do not express their gratitude with words, 577 [22] but anyone who does the Bushmen a kindness may be sure that they will manifest their gratitude by deeds to the point of self-sacrifice.

To help a fellow human being who is in trouble is a moral obligation. There is a report of a prospector who lost his [648] way in the bush forest and was then saved by the Bushmen, with whom he could not even converse; they took care of him for several days and finally put him on the right path.

Agreements and promises are kept unconditionally by the Bushman, although it is true that he usually arrives a little too late. Once, when an ox from the ox-cart of the Catholic mission had to be left behind on the way to the Okovanggo, it was put in the care of the Bushmen and they were to deliver it at the time of the next full moon. The people kept their word, and the ox was delivered, well-fed, at the specified time.

As a comrade, the Bushman is reliable and faithful (1).

181 648 1. A European had once illegally

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Kung

method had been established. The /Kõ and /Gikwe have not incorporated the belief into their terminological systems except in a very limited way. The /Kung, however, have done so, and appear to have adapted it as logically as possible to the generational method. They apply it only to somewhat distant relationships, namely, grandparents, grandchildren, collaterals, secondary affines, and name-relatives. They do not apply it in the close biological relationships of parent, offspring or sibling or in the primary affinal relationships. Consistency is maintained by the rule that a child must not be named for a parent.

We think that the term */gu!na* came into the system with the homonymous method and that perhaps it used originally to be applied only to the person for whom ego is named. It is not strictly a kinship term, being composed of translateable words, 'big or old name'. We think it may have been superimposed upon *tun!ga* (which probably comes from the same root as *tũn*). *Tun!ga* may originally have been applied to grandfather, man-speaking as well as woman-speaking, and later */gu!na* may have become associated with grandfather because so many men are named for their grandfathers. If this is so, an anomalous situation remains unresolved. *Tun!ga* is applied to consanguineous kin and affines and allows joking, woman-speaking. Man-speaking, it is applied only to affines and prohibits joking. If it was originally the term for grandfather, man-speaking, we reason that it should allow joking, and we cannot explain this anomaly.

Whatever may be the answer to these questions, the /Kung have put to good use the belief that persons who have the same name partake of each other's entities. This belief has given them the name-relationship.

It is our impression that the practice of applying terms to name-relatives has appealed to the /Kung and that they have developed it to the full. The /Kung apply a kinship term to every /Kung they meet or almost everyone. /Qui was the only informant who worked with us on this subject who had ever met a /Kung Bushman for whom he had no kinship term. He had met four who came from a distance and whose names were not among those commonly used in the Nyae Nyae region. Ta//ne was one of the names. Gao, who was present, told /Qui that he had a *tsu* named Ta//ne, and he and /Qui nodded together in agreement that they would find a way for /Qui to give Ta//ne a term should they meet again. We know two men who used the term */go* for each other because each of them had a brother named Dam. The system seems to have been flexible and expansive in the application of terms to name-relatives.

The /Kung are small of stature and non-aggressive. They are timid and apprehensive of strangers. Their word for stranger is *ju dole*. *Ju* means person, *dole* means strange or harmful—one word for both concepts, in the /Kung language, as though they were a single concept. The /Kung have no social organization larger than the band of kin who live together but they have utilized the name-relationship to supply the cohesive factor which is supplied in other societies by various social structures. When a /Kung meets a stranger and finds that he has the same name as one of his kin and bestows a kinship term upon him, he is reassured and feels a sense of belonging.

Gao, the brother of /U, went on an errand for us to Khadum. Khadum is about 115 miles north of Gautscha and about 40 miles north of Cho/ana where we were staying at the time. He had never been to Khadum before, and the /Kung Bushmen who lived

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Kung

602 there at once called him *ju dole*. He was in haste to say that he had heard that the father of one of the people at Khadum had the same name as his father and that another had
●609 a brother named Gao. ' Oh,' said the Khadum people, in effect, ' so you are Gao's */gu/na* ', and they took him to their fire and gave him a present of edible gum.

602 The name connexions of the /Kung of Nyae Nyae extend throughout the region.
619 Thinking of Gautscha Pan as approximately the centre, the name connexions extend about 80 miles to the south, and include the /Kung who live at Gum and at a few
182 small water-holes south of Gum. To the north of Gautscha Pan they extend about 75 miles to Samangaigai, and about 100 miles to Cho/ana, and may be said now to touch upon Khadum, 115 miles from Gautscha Pan. The country to the west, between Gautscha Pan and the farmed area of South West Africa, is waterless and uninhabited. To the east the /Kung name connexions reach some 60 or 80 miles to the cattle posts of Chwana and Herero at Kai Kai and Kubi, where some /Kung work as herdsmen and others visit and trade. The /Kung who live in this region are not *ju dole* to each other. The name-relationship makes them feel they are one people.

619 But there are edges to this sense of being one people. At Karakuwise to the north-west, about 100 miles away from the centre of the Nyae Nyae area, and at Nuragas, about 200 miles away, there are /Kung Bushmen. Although none of the Nyae Nyae people have been there, the people of Nyae Nyae know that those people speak the same language. However, the Karakuwise and the Nuragas people are distant, and they are *ju dole*. The people of Nyae Nyae say that they hear that the people of Nuragas put a strange poison into the pipes they give you to smoke which makes you become as thin as a stick and then die. The people of Nyae Nyae do not know the names of the people at Nuragas.

Résumé

000 LA TERMINOLOGIE DE LA PARENTÉ CHEZ LES BOSCHIMANS /KUNG

Les Boschimans /Kung sont des chasseurs et des ramasseurs nomades, qui ont eu très peu de contacts avec d'autres tribus ou avec des Européens; ils vivent en petites bandes de parents consanguins et d'affins proches, qui sont, pour la plupart, isolés à l'intérieur de leurs propres territoires, sauf pour des visites plus ou moins rares par d'autres bandes. Le système /Kung de terminologie de parenté présente deux aspects: d'après l'un, les termes sont appliqués suivant la situation biologique des personnes; d'après l'autre, les personnes sont classées avec d'autres, du fait qu'elles ont les mêmes noms. Du point de vue terminologique, deux personnes quelconques ne peuvent être apparentées simultanément de plus d'une façon, bien qu'elles puissent changer leur rapport terminologique par le mariage, ou, parfois, par le changement de leurs noms. En général, les termes employés indiquent l'âge biologique relatif des personnes qui s'appliquent mutuellement des termes de parenté. Les mêmes termes sont utilisés en s'adressant à une personne et en y faisant allusion. Pour les besoins de l'analyse, on peut distinguer entre deux systèmes de terminologie de parenté: le système A s'applique à des parents consanguins et aux personnes classées avec eux, soit par suite d'un rapport entre leurs noms, soit parce qu'elles se sont mariées avec ces parents. Le système B s'applique aux affins. Il y a trois catégories de termes dans le système A, selon leur emploi entre: (1) père ou mère et enfant; (2) ' siblings ' (enfants de mêmes père et mère), et (3) générations. Dans cette dernière catégorie, la personne plus âgée emploie invariablement une forme diminutive en s'adressant, ou en faisant allusion, à la personne

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watching part of a dance. This is not a beauty of the flesh, and therefore exists in everyone who is not an infant or stiff with age. Bushmen have long, slender arms and legs, and the men are built for running, all lean muscle and fine bone, and consequently they often seem younger than they are. They are delicate of proportion, too, and they speak very softly.

Bushmen dress themselves in the skins of animals, a man wearing only a leather loincloth and a woman a small leather apron and a big kaross, a leather cape made from a whole animal hide, belted at the waist with a sinew cord, knotted at the shoulder, forming a pouch in back where a baby can ride, and where the woman carries her blown ostrich eggs, which are used as water containers. Bushmen are a very neat people; they keep their clothes tidily about themselves, and though they do not really need haircuts because their curly hair breaks off by itself, they prefer to keep their hair cropped close to their heads. White ornaments of ostrich-eggshell beads dangle from tufts of their hair and are strung in tiny bands around their arms and knees. Sometimes they wear leather sandals, but mostly their hard brown feet are bare.

The first time we came to the Kalahari, we spent several months looking for Bushmen. It was very hard for us to find them because they are shy of any stranger. If they believe that you are coming, they run away like foxes to hide in the grass until you have gone. Their tiny huts, dome-shaped and made of grass, are also inconspicuous. I once walked right into an empty werf, as their tiny villages are called, and didn't see the little scherms, or huts, hidden in the grass until I noticed a small skin bag dangling in a shadow, which was a doorway. Then I saw the frame of the scherm around it, then the other scherms as well. The werf was abandoned, all the people had slipped away, but I heard two voices whis-

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609 621 pering in the grass near by. You can tell by these werfs that there are Bushmen in an area, and also by their footprints on narrow trails which they share with the game and which run all through the desert. You may find footprints or you may see a little pile of white ash, the fire that a Bushman kindled where he spent the night. Otherwise, to find them you must depend on luck or on the fact that the Bushmen of an area may have heard something good about you and will not be too afraid.

105 Culturally and historically, the Bushmen are an interesting people, for they and the Hottentots, who belong to the same racial and language groups, are the earliest human inhabitants still living in southern Africa. There are now from thirty to fifty thousand Bushmen, who are divided into several language groups. Their languages are related to each other and to the Hottentot language, and are in what is known as the Khoisan language group, made up of most of the click languages spoken in South Africa. A click language has sharp pops and clicks made with the tongue in various parts of the mouth, combined with an implosion of the breath, very difficult to understand, harder still to pronounce, as the slightest mistake may change the meaning of a word entirely. For example, the work *//kx'a*, which in one of the Bushman languages means *mangetti*, a certain kind of nut-bearing tree, is pronounced by making a lateral click for which the tongue is pulled sharply away from the sides of the mouth, producing the click one makes when calling a horse, followed by a scraped *k* turning to a g, followed by a glottal stop—a slight pause or tiny choking sound made as the back of the tongue stops the breath—which is followed at last by the vowel. To make a mistake is easy, and that is why non-Bushmen have a hard time learning the language, and why, when they do learn, they are often misunderstood.

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unmarried son or two, and their daughters' children. Bushmen are polygynous, and a man is allowed by custom to have as many wives as he can afford, depending on how well he hunts—usually a man can afford only one wife, sometimes two (often a pair of sisters), and once we heard of a man with four wives. For this reason there are often more women than men in a band.

The immediate family, a man, his wife, or wives, and children, is the only solid social unit; otherwise the small bands are always breaking up and recombining with other small bands as the structures of single families change, through marriages, divorces, deaths, or as the family decides to pay a prolonged visit to a different group of relatives.

Any Bushman will either be related by blood or marriage or will be acquainted with all the other Bushmen in his area but this is as far as Bushmen go in their affinities. They do not recognize as their own people strange Bushmen who speak the same language; in fact, they suspect and fear them as they do any stranger.

We have visited four of the Bushman language groups, two of which we stayed with for long periods of time. In 1951, after a survey expedition to learn where Bushmen could be found, we went into the Nyae Nyae area of South-West Africa, close to the border of Bechuanaland, to look for Kung Bushmen. We found a band living near a waterhole, as it was June, the drought of the year, and we stayed with them for four months. At first only a few Bushmen were there, but as the news spread that we were friendly, more and more people came to visit us and receive presents of tobacco and salt, for Bushmen love to smoke but rarely have tobacco, which they get in trade. Also, most of the Bushmen had never seen a European before, none had ever seen a European woman, and they came by dozens to sit together in a cluster

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[151] that marks an edible root, or see a scorpion hidden in the dust
174 and jump over it. So Bushmen survive in the most rigorous places; they survive in the dense, mosquito-ridden papyrus
131 swamps of the Okovango River, steaming like a jungle and
133 dangerous with snakes and fever, where the River Bushmen
[184] live, the only Bushmen with plenty of water; they also survive on the vast, rolling steppes of central Bechuanaland, the territory of the Gikwe Bushmen, who for the nine dry months of the year have no water at all and do without it.

609 Besides the fact that Bushmen alone can live in the land
563 they occupy, there is another reason for their remoteness and
648 shyness. They are in many instances exploited by the Bantu farmers, and by a few of the European farmers, usually those who need free or almost free labor. Many Bantu farms and households have Bushman servants, or serfs, rather, as they usually come from the land on or near the farm, and when working they are paid nothing but are given food, tobacco,
464 and sometimes cast-off clothing as wages. Some European
648 farms in Bechuanaland and some in South-West Africa have Bushman laborers too, though most European farmers do not depend on Bushman labor. Those European farmers who do employ Bushmen usually pay wages, about ten shillings a month, plus a ration of food to each Bushman who is working, though not necessarily to his family, consisting of about a pound of cornmeal and a quart of milk a day, meat occasionally, and weekly a ration of tobacco. Perhaps the employer will add a set of clothing—that is, a pair of cast-off pants and a shirt—and perhaps a blanket every year, but occasionally they pay their labor in cast-off clothing and omit the ten shillings altogether.

648 European clothing is esteemed among Bushmen, for it is
291 symbolic to them of a people mightier than themselves, and
439

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also because, made of cloth instead of leather, it is more clinging, therefore warmer and more comfortable, and dries faster when wet. It is sought after and desired, it is got through employment; yet, even so, Bushmen hesitate to seek employment because they believe that they will be badly treated (as they sometimes are) and they often find the customary wage and food ration to be inadequate for anyone who must support a family. Supposedly, the wives of Bushmen laborers are free to look on the farmer's land for roots and berries, as they would if they were living in the veld; but, as it happens, after a few years the supply of wild food around a farm becomes exhausted.

The Bantu farmers, being as a rule much poorer than the European farmers, are less generous to their Bushman serfs. They also give a food ration of cornmeal and milk but almost never meat, for any meat that may come into the Bantu kraal is eaten by the Bantus unless it is the carcass of a hyena or a leopard which the Bantu masters have killed for the pelt. The Bantus say: "Our Bushman servants are like our children; they herd our cattle for us and we feed them. A child does not ask for wages when he helps with the family work."

Besides this, the Bantus badly cheat the Bushmen who come in from the veld to trade cured antelope hides for metal and tobacco, sometimes asking several hides, worth several pounds apiece, for enough tobacco to fill the palm of the Bushman's hand, or for a piece of wire long enough to make an arrowhead. All in all, it does not benefit the Bushmen to live anywhere near Bantu or European settlements, and that is why the Bushmen of the veld run and hide when they see Europeans coming, believing that they may be taken by force (as they sometimes are), and why they avoid going to a Bantu settlement except to trade for tobacco when they feel

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609 they must smoke, or when they are dying of thirst and must
648 come in to beg for water.

159 Once I talked with a young Bushman who had visited one
563 of our camps in Bechuanaland many times, who spoke Afri-
[191] kaans, and whom I shall call Tami. I could speak a little Afrikaans, so he and I could talk together. He was in his early thirties and had been working for some time for European farmers. When I met him he was married, and as his wife had
[465] just had a baby, he felt that his ten-shilling-a-month wage was inadequate and he planned to move to another part of the country where he hoped to be paid more. As it is rather unusual for a Bushman to uproot himself from his own country, no matter how long he has been on a farm and away from his own people, I asked him where he had come from and how he had learned Afrikaans.

[153] "Oh," he said, "I learned Afrikaans in the places I have
[191] been. I have worked for white men since I was a young boy and I have always been fast to learn their languages. In the same way I have learned the languages of the black people."

"Where did you live before you worked for white people?" I asked.

"We lived not far from Nurigaas, at the edge of the police zone. I am a young person still, but I remember that Nurigaas was all wild then. We always lived there."

"With your parents?"

"Yes, until the police boys [1] took the old man my father."

I asked him what had happened, and he said: "We lived at the edge of the police zone, you know. We lived with
888 other Bushmen there, and my sister, she was there. My
159 mother's father was still alive then, but he was too old, he
563 couldn't even carry water, and my mother had to do every-

[1] Police boys are native policemen, usually Bantu.

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181 the Bantus, who are staunch and brave and in the past have waged great wars. But Bushmen deplore and misunderstand bravery. The heroes of their legends are always little jackals who trick, lie, and narrowly escape, rather than larger, bolder [539] animals such as lions (who in the Kalahari are something of a master race). In the Bushmen's stories, lions are always being scalded, singed, duped, cuckolded, or killed.

181 Bushmen cannot afford to fight with each other and almost 182 never do because their only real weapon is their arrow poison, 578 for which there is no antidote. But even were they to disre- 422 gard this danger, Bushmen would try not to fight because they have no mechanism in their culture for dealing with disagreements other than to remove the causes of the disagreements. Their hold on life is too tenuous to permit quarreling among themselves. A Bushman will go to any lengths to avoid making other Bushmen jealous of him, and for this reason the few possessions that Bushmen have are constantly circling among the members of their groups. No one cares to keep a particularly good knife too long, even though he may want it desperately, because he will become the object of envy; as he sits by himself polishing a fine edge on the blade he will hear the soft voices of the other men in his band saying: "Look at him there, admiring his knife while we have nothing." Soon somebody will ask him for his knife, for everybody would like to have it, and he will give it away. Their culture insists that they share with each other, and it has never happened that a Bushman failed to share objects, food, or water with the other members of his band, for without very rigid co-operation Bushmen could not survive the famines and droughts that the Kalahari offers them.

181 The other reason for their submissiveness is that Bushmen, 609 whose possessions are only sticks and bones, beads made of eggshell and fragments of leather, are overwhelmed by the

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possessions of Bantus and Europeans—horses and cattle, dogs, melon lands, medicines, rifles, boots, and trucks—as well as their enormous size, heavy necks and arms, great beards, and roaring voices. Europeans are beyond the powers of Bushmen's imagination, more awesome in stature, in possessions, in might, than even the Bushmen's god, who can be cajoled, who hunts with a bow and arrow. Bushmen consider the Europeans and the Bantus to be superior beings. Bantus and Europeans consider the Bushmen to be inferior beings, and, without resisting, a Bushman always bows to a European or a Bantu person's will.

Once an old man, a veld Bushman, told us the story of the reim and the grass fiber. A reim is a leather rope which the Bantus make by skinning a cow with a long, spiraling cut that goes around and around the body so that the hide comes off all in one piece a few inches wide and many yards long, which is then stretched and cured, making a piece of leather useful for harnessing oxen or building a hut.

"In the earliest days," the old man said, "the Bushmen and the non-Bushmen were all one nation, and the great god came to earth and gave them a rope. Half the rope was made of reim and half was made of grass fiber. The great god told all the people to pull on the rope, and the non-Bushmen came away with the reim, but the Bushmen got only the grass fiber. After that, the non-Bushmen had cattle and reims and all those things, but the Bushmen had only the things that are in the veld. If this ever happened again," the old man said, "I would tell the Bushmen to make sure they got the reim half."

So the distinction between people was caused by the great god, and the Bushmen, who want only to be left in peace, do not compete in issues which they cannot win. They are only frightened by other peoples and hope to be spared their atten-

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181 tion. Kung Bushmen call all strangers *zhu dole*, which means
609 "stranger" but, literally, "dangerous person"; they call all non-Bushmen *zo si*, which means "animals without hooves," because, they say, non-Bushmen are angry and dangerous like lions and hyenas. But Kung Bushmen call themselves *zhu twa si*, the harmless people. *Twa* means "just" or "only," in the sense that you say: "It was just the wind" or "It is only me."

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136 the great veld fires had burned away the dry grass farther in the north, causing new green grass to spring up, luring the antelope to come there. We saw fires very near us and we wondered if the Bushmen had followed the game to the north.

361 609 One day we came to a tiny, low forest where we decided to camp for the night. As we searched among the little trees for firewood, we came upon three scherms, three little huts, built by Bushmen and abandoned very recently. The ashes of the fires were still warm. The people who lived there had surely heard us and had run away, leaving many of their possessions behind. We found a pot, burned black from use, a few white beads, a quiver with arrows, and a digging-stick, which is a branch a few feet long with the bark peeled off and the twigs trimmed away, sharpened at one end and used by Bushmen as a spade to break the hard ground when they dig roots. We then found footprints made by the people when they had rushed off in all directions; and later, as we followed the tracks, we even found the prints of hands and knees where someone had crawled hastily across an open place.

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609 The discovery of these huts made us very hopeful, as we had traveled much farther than we had expected. We felt confident that Gishe, who had been born near our very campsite, would be able to track the people and find them, or that they would be plagued by curiosity and finally visit us. They did not, however; nor did they come back for their possessions, nor was Gishe able to find them. He had been living on a farm for many years and was no longer an expert tracker; and after the night dew had fallen during the evening that we found the werf, the tracks were old.

Of course, it was useless for us to wander around the veld hoping to stumble upon fresh tracks, although we tried the following day without success. We also sent Gishe to look for

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the people, but all he did was set the veld on fire; he had been careless when lighting his pipe. He had asked to have matches to start a fire in case a lion saw him, so that when we saw smoke rising from the direction he had taken, we ran to the spot, then had to run back again to save our trucks when the wind turned the fire toward our camp. After that, we were about to give up and move farther into the veld, thinking that the Bushmen had perhaps gone far away. We had only the water that we carried and we were wasting it by waiting; but in the evening, in the quiet, cold air, when some of us happened to be standing at the edge of camp, we heard an ax ringing as somebody chopped wood far away, the sound carried to us on the wind. It was surely the people; there is no other sound in the world exactly like an ax ringing, and we decided to wait a few more days.

We set up a permanent camp. We arranged our trucks, pitched our tents, and waited. The third night that we waited there, all scattered in our blankets over the ground, three lions walked among us as we slept, sniffed us, and watched us with their yellow eyes, although we didn't know until morning when we found their tracks.

The fourth night a veld fire passed us. We were awake then; we saw the bright flames leaping at the trees, smelled the smoke, and heard the fire roaring as the wind pushed it forward into the grass.

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Bushmen believe that certain famous sorcerers, once medicine men who chose to be poisoners and magicians instead of healers, have taken the form of certain lions, which can always be distinguished from ordinary lions by their great size and their ability to float in the air. Also, Bushmen say, the eclipses of the moon are caused by lions, as on very bright nights a lion may cover the moon's face with a great paw, giving himself darkness for better hunting.

Usually, when a lion sees you, he skulks away or bounds off in great, ungainly leaps, in clumsy dodges, making a fool of himself because he is frightened; but when one raises his head and looks right at you, then turns as this one did, and walks off without even looking back, you understand at once why Bushmen believe the things they do.

As the lion walked away into a thicket of acacia trees we climbed off the truck and followed him. It was rash of us, but we were not afraid of him. We wanted a photograph. However, he had disappeared, and as we were looking cautiously around among the trunks of little trees we heard a motor roaring, gears grinding; and finally, as we watched, the jeep arrived with Cass and Bob (Dr. Story), who told us to go back to camp as fast as we could. Two Bushmen had arrived.

We started back at once and got there late in the afternoon, and there we found them, two small men, one old, one young, in silhouette as they squatted by the fire, turning as we came to look at us, very nervous and very ill at ease. They had been given food and tobacco—a blue cloud hung above their heads—and a bucket of water, but during the course of the afternoon they had drunk the bucket dry. As Theunis and Gishe, the only people who could have spoken to both them and us, had been away, the rest of the expedition had had to wait anxiously for our return, unable to communicate a single word.

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291 Both men were thin, brown-skinned, and wore nothing but loincloths, and they looked very out of place next to us, among our big trucks and boxes of equipment, squatting naked like two frogs against the long grass and reddening sky of their country. We sat by the fire to talk with them, and it was the old man who answered our questions. His name was
194 551 Ukwane, and he seemed very old, for he spoke with a hesitant, cracked voice that faded into a whisper at the end of every phrase, and whenever some of us would leave or join the group at the fire he would stare intently at us, frowning,
104 leaning forward a little because he could barely see us, his eyes being filmed with cataracts, hazy blue.

142 Ukwane had great wrinkles lengthwise down his belly where his paunch had shrunk. His hands were knobbed and his shoulders stiff, yet his legs were as supple as a baby's, for
514 he sat crouched with his knees in the air and his heels tucked up tight against his buttocks. His skin looked old, too, like
303 old leather, hardened and black like a glove that has been left in the rain, and his curly hair was disheveled, uncut, untidy with pieces of straw.

609 Our questions frightened Ukwane, and often he was at a loss for something to reply. He thought we were policemen coming to look for some lost horses, for somehow a rumor had reached into the farthest corners of the veld that a European farmer had lost seven horses and all the people in the veld were afraid for their lives. The first thing he said was that he hadn't seen any horses and certainly hadn't taken them himself. He was too old, he said. We told him that we were not policemen and, besides, had never heard of the horses, but he was not reassured. He coughed and turned to the young man, who looked at us with nothing to say.

609 The young man was also very shy, but had a greater dignity
194 than Ukwane because of his cool, proud bearing. He said

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very little, and when he did speak it was in a voice so soft that it was almost inaudible. Also, he held his hand in front of his mouth with a finger against his lips, which muffled his words so that only Ukwane could understand them. This was what the young man intended; he meant for the old man to speak for them both and only wanted to help him through tight spots in the conversation.

The young man told us his name, though, which was Gai. Gai sat crouching too, like Ukwane, and kept self-consciously shifting his position, pretending to be unconcerned. He glanced at us out of the corners of his eyes and smiled skeptically from time to time, for although he did not know us and, as we learned later, had not seen Europeans before, therefore had no way of judging our remarks and our expressions, he was younger than Ukwane, and prouder, and was afraid of showing his naïveté, afraid of seeming to believe a lie or disbelieving something that everyone should know was true.

Gai was extremely handsome. In fact, he was one of the most beautiful human beings I have ever seen, tall for a Bushman, his head shaved, showing a strong, domed skull. His face was strong, too, a little heavy of bone, with a big jaw which he carried thrust forward and up so that he looked at you from the bottom of his eyes, a reserved gaze. His body was smooth and brown, built compactly, the body itself long in proportion to the arms and legs. Like all Bushmen, he was narrow of shoulder and hip, with a deep chest and a large belly, and when seen from the side as his belly relaxed he seemed wider from front to back than he was from side to side, very like a hunting animal whose chest is deep but narrow. Gai was also well dressed, not with a strip of leather like Ukwane, but with a beautifully designed, worked, and fringed loincloth with two wide tabs at the back which he could spread to sit on. He wore a band around his hips, too,

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as a belt for the loincloth, with a fringe of leather strips so long that when he sat down the fringe lay on the ground.

We asked them where they lived, and Ukwane, who was afraid to answer, said he was old and did not remember. Gai said they lived many days' journey to the east. We asked if the huts beside our camp belonged to them, and they said no, they had never seen them before, neither did they have the slightest idea how they came to be there.

We gave them some more tobacco as a gesture of our good faith and we told them that we had come from America, hundreds of days' travel and across a great body of water, but of course they had never heard of America or the ocean and thought we meant the Okovango River, and at that they didn't really believe us, although they were too polite to tell us so. "Merica," they said softly, with a beautiful, curled *r*, almost a *d* or an *l*. We said that we had come to visit them and to give them presents. We said that we were the friends of many Bushmen in the west where we had lived for a year, and had been given Bushman names, so we weren't entirely strangers. We told them the names, which made them smile, because of course they weren't Gikwe names, but Gai and Ukwane softened a little with this and admitted that, after all, the huts were theirs.

Finally they told us that a few nights ago they had been sitting at their fires, the two men, their wives and children, and one other family, when they had heard the sound of our trucks, which had frightened them so that they had run off into the veld in all directions, taking nothing with them except the few possessions that had come first to hand. Ukwane, warming a little, said that he had been so terrified that he had crawled away on his hands and knees, afraid to show his head above the tops of the bushes.

Presently they had found each other again and had settled

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into a new place, although now they had no scherms. For the next days they had waited and listened, and when they had heard our truck leave they had assumed that we were gone, and had returned to get the rest of their things. Then they had noticed our trucks, and believing that they were surrounded and had fallen into our trap, they had come to surrender. Ukwane felt more relaxed and laughed at this, a warm, wheezy chuckle, showing a few teeth, slapping his chest and coughing from the smoke which he had been inhaling deeply. Seeing Ukwane, the rest of us laughed, too, but Gai only stiffened and smiled an icy smile. Behind his head the sun was setting, small and red, away over the edge of the flat plain, making all the little, distant trees against it look black and very lonely; and the new moon followed after into the salmon light, a heavy crescent flat on its back and bow-shaped, yellow and malevolent like the smile.

Before they went to sleep that night, the two men accepted a second bucketful of water as a present. The bucket they would return, but the water was for them alone, an enormous present in the desert, for which they were very grateful. They began to drink from it, scooping the water up with their hands and, later, lifting the bucket to drink from its rim. After that they lay down, naked as they were on the bare ground, close to the fire, with their knees bent, letting as much skin as possible be exposed to the heat. The warm smoke and ashes blew over them and they went to sleep on their sides as Bushmen always must, with one ear on the ground but with the other up and listening, to hear what comes along. Because it was cold they woke up often, and every time they woke they drank, so in the morning only the bottom of the pail had water in it, frozen into a circle of ice.

The next day the two men agreed to take some of us to their werf, and we drove off with Ukwane in the jeep and

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609 Gai on the hood to point the way. From his higher position he noticed the long horns of a gemsbok in the grass and he signaled for the jeep to stop. Then he, John, and Theunis, taking a rifle, slipped out of the jeep and ran off after it, bent over and crouched so low that only their backs showed, as the backs of animals would, gliding above the grass. The gemsbok saw them and ran away toward a patch of heavy bush in the plain, the great V of horns a crown over its head. The men ran after, standing now, and in an hour they came back to where Ukwane and I were waiting, lying on our stomachs under the jeep to be in shade, saying that they had killed it. We drove to the spot where the gemsbok, a female, lay and brought her with us, a present to offer the other Bushmen.

361 We drove for several hours and at last we came to a wide plain, grown over heavily with small trees of slender trunks, with a few short branches sprouting leaves, like fence posts. Gai directed us to one of the smaller trees in the center of the [237] plain and told us to stop. He climbed down and looked 276 around over the veld, then bent and picked up a small pipe, a piece of the leg bone of an antelope. He asked us for a match, lit his pipe, and smoked it.

At last we noticed on the other side of the tree two shallow depressions scooped in the sand and lined with grass, like [51] the shallow, scooped nests of shore birds on a beach—the homes of the families, where the people could lie curled up [132] just below the surface of the plain to let the cold night wind which blows across the veld pass over them.

Other than the depressions, except for a small pile of brown, twisted bean shells, no sign would show that people lived there. Later we saw another scooped pit and a stick thrust upright in the ground beside it, right at our feet, which [4-23] was Gai's place; the stick was to mark the spot, although Gai

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could have found his shallow pit at any time of the day or night.

Nobody was there; everyone had run away. We sat down and waited while Gai put his hands to his mouth and shouted, trying to summon the people back again. When nobody came or even answered him, he flung his pipe to the ground and marched off to find them among the bushes, alternately shouting to his hidden relatives and muttering to himself, for they might be far away and the day was getting warm.

We sat in the middle ground between the depressions so that we wouldn't risk stepping on or crushing anybody's hidden things, for, without knowing it, a European can in a moment trample through a Bushman's cache, breaking the delicate bone or wooden objects, bending the reed arrows, or crushing eggshell beads. Also, among certain groups of Bushmen, every fire has a man's side and a woman's side, determined by the position of the fire as you face the doorway of the scherm, the man's side being on the right, the woman's on the left. If a man sits on the woman's side, or where a woman has been sitting, he will become impotent and will also lose his power to hunt, and if a woman sits where a man has been sitting, she will get a disease in her vagina. Something intangible, invisible, but dangerously powerful, remains on the ground. We did not know which side was which of this werf's fires, or even for sure where the fires were; we did not even know that the Gikwe had this custom, for we had learned it from Kung Bushmen, but we knew that if they did they would not welcome our contaminating their ground. We would have liked to look around, but the best thing we could do was to keep our big boots and our bodies away from their delicate, fragile, almost invisible community.

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609 In a short time we heard a rustle in the veld, and a young
854 woman who seemed to be in her early twenties stepped from the bushes. She was, Ukwane said, Gai's wife, and on her hip she carried a baby, a naked three-year-old who looked at us from his wide eyes fearlessly, then, realizing that we were strangers, buried his face in his mother's arm. His mother stroked him calmly and came toward us smiling and nodding her head graciously, although a little pulse was hammering in the V of her throat. We learned later that she had been sitting in the bushes very near us, and when she had seen her husband go by she had assumed that everything was all right and had come to greet us, not bothering to answer his cries.

142 She was a short, sturdy woman with round arms, long thighs, and short calves. She had a rather large belly and
291 square, strong shoulders, and she wore a very tattered cape or kaross over her back, with a small leather apron around her hips. She had no ornaments except a row of blue scars over
304 her eyes, a decoration, and she had allowed her hair to be-
302 come disheveled, long, and a little tangled, hanging down
184 over her ears in tight spirals, instead of having shaved it off as most Bushman women do. All this gave her a very matter-of-fact air, which was not deceiving, for she saw in a glance that we were harmless and, looking us over, sat down at once beside me.

304 Her baby pulled, twisted, and tugged at her, and from the way he behaved I judged that he kept her too busy to be for-
[854] ever cutting her hair or making bead ornaments. Besides, she told us later, if she wore ornaments, the baby pulled them off. She had her row of scars, though, delicate and arching over her brow, making her eyes seem wider; as well as a row of striped scars along her thighs. These, say Bushmen, are made to imitate the beauty of zebras, and many women wear them, having been decorated when they were still young. It

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is a painful procedure. The cuts are made on the thighs and forehead with a knife or ax blade, then charcoal is rubbed in, but the woman told us later that in her case it had been worth the pain and trouble because, she said, she was extremely ugly and had been made more beautiful.

Her baby's name was Nhwakwe, she told me, and after that we were at a loss for conversation. I offered her a cigarette, which she declined, indicating that it made her cough. I was surprised, for she was the only Bushman I had ever met, man, woman, or child, who did not smoke.

Presently she smiled, pressed her hand to her chest, and said: "Tsetchwe." It was her name.

"Elizabeth," I said, pointing to myself.

"Nisabe," she answered, pronouncing after me and inclining her head graciously. She looked me over carefully without really staring, which to Bushmen is rude. Then, having surely suspected that I was a woman, she put her hand on my breast gravely, and, finding that I was, she gravely touched her own breast. Many Bushmen do this; to them all Europeans look the same.

"*Tsau si*" (women), she said.

Then after a moment's pause, Tsetchwe began to teach me a few words, the names of a few objects around us, grass, rock, bean shell, so that we could have a conversation later. As she talked she took a handful of the beans out of her kaross, broke them open, and began to eat them. This is a wonderful, bitter bean, shaped like a lima bean, which grows on tiny bushes in patches throughout the Kalahari. When you eat these beans they burn your tongue, throat, and stomach, but they take away hunger and thirst. Besides the beans in her kaross, Tsetchwe, who began unloading, brought out a large, edible root which she had dug up—she must have been gathering food before we came—and put it in the shade of a

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609 222 bush beside her fireplace. Also, she brought out six round green melons which are called *tsama* melons, and which, during the autumn, provide the only liquid available for all the Bushmen in the desert, and for all the game antelope besides. Under the green rind a tsama is very like a watermelon, filled with small oval seeds and very watery in texture, but is itself pale green and smaller, the size of a small cantaloupe. Tsetchwe placed one between her feet and, gripping it firmly with her strong toes, chopped a hole in the top of it with her digging-stick; then, lifting the cap away like the lid of a jack-o'-lantern, she mashed the pulp inside until it was liquid. She put the melon to her mouth and, tipping her head back, drank from it, using her long digging-stick to help push the pulp into her mouth, working it like an enormous chopstick, making a watery noise as she sucked. When Tsetchwe had collected a mouthful of seeds she put the melon down, took an old, dry tsama melon rind from her kaross, and spat the seeds into it to save them, for they can be roasted and eaten like nuts when they are dry. Tsetchwe drank all the liquid in the rind and seemed refreshed as she cast the empty rind over her shoulder and brushed off her mouth and hands.

609 621 At last Gai strode back into the werf, followed at a distance by a group of three small boys and, much farther, by three old women who stood waist-deep in bushes, close together like three antelope, craning their necks to see us.

609 276 621 When they noticed Tsetchwe and Ukwane, they came forward with more confidence, accepted tobacco, and, squatting immediately, began to smoke. It had been months, Ukwane said, since they had used their last tobacco, had been reduced to smoking leaves, and they were very happy to have the tobacco we had give them. Bushmen love to smoke. They say that tobacco, as well as the wild beans, takes away hunger and thirst, and, besides that, it makes their hearts glad. One

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of the old women, Dasina, who was Tsetchwe's mother, inhaled too deeply and began to faint. Tsetchwe half turned her mother so that everyone would not see her, and, putting an arm around her for support, let the old woman lean on her shoulder. Our interpreter laughed, and Tsetchwe turned to glare. Tsetchwe's back was exactly like her mother's, broad but curved in at the waist, the old woman's a little bloated but Tsetchwe's young and strong.

Another old woman was smoking, too, puffing on a short, wide pipe cut from a leg bone of some large antelope, so big that she had to stuff one end with grass to keep the tobacco inside. She almost unhinged her jaw each time she puffed. She would inhale and spit, cough, and inhale again without a sign of dizziness, and when she saw Dasina faint she too laughed out loudly. Her name, she told us, was Twikwe.

Twikwe was skinny and tall as a man, with long, lanky arms that she flung about in the air, gesturing, and long legs that jerked when she walked. She wore only a short piece of leather that reached from her waist to her thighs, and we could see that she was wrinkled from head to foot, her skin hanging in long, vertical wrinkles down her thighs and belly, like an old apple that has dried. She talked incessantly and loudly, always opening and closing her mouth, and she joked, for Ukwane and the young boys near her laughed at everything she said. She was telling how her husband had outdistanced her as they were running away and was surely running still. Every now and then she stopped her talk to shout out to him, jeering, saying that he was depriving himself of tobacco and should come back; then everyone would listen, but no sound came from him, no answer. He never did come back, and in the weeks we were there we never saw him. Perhaps he was running away from Twikwe, for we later learned that he was living in a valley with his other wife.

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481 trees, and on our way we found a path where before there
487 had been none. We followed it, it led to camp, and at its end we found Gai and eighteen other Bushmen, whose feet as they had walked in single file had worn a track. As we ap-
609 proached, the eighteen strangers drew back and together, the women behind the men, babies in their arms, and watched us hostilely. Gai persuaded them to sit down, which they did, all together, and when we asked them if they were hungry they said yes, so we gave them a drink of water and set a big pot of cornmeal to cook on our fire. We gave them each tobacco, which they smoked while they waited for the cornmeal to cook.

621 In that band there were six men, five of them in their thir-
162 ties, five women who seemed much younger, and one woman
596 who was very old. There were also three young boys and three babies, two girls and a boy. We guessed from the looks of the people—and later found that we were right—that the band was a small extended family. The old woman seemed to be the key figure of the band, for with her were her two sons and three daughters, their wives and husbands, and their children. The sixth man—a boy, really—did not seem to belong in this tightly woven group, for he was not married, being too young; he seemed too young to be the child of the old woman, though too old to be her grandchild, and I wondered who he was. Witabe's father was not there, and on that trip we did not find him.

142 The three sisters of the band were all arrestingly beautiful. They looked alike, with very fine faces, slender features, large eyes, and they all wore handsome white bead ornaments. Heavy eyelids, set off by the pronounced, delicate bones of their faces, made them look of uncertain race, or like houris, and their slender bodies with skins slightly wrinkled made them seem of uncertain age. Perhaps the sun had made the

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533 534 The young, unmarried man took a small musical instrument out of his hunting-bag, borrowed a dry tsama rind from one of the women, and, setting the instrument on the hollow rind, began to play. He filled the air with sweet, soft music, full of resonance and open, minor chords, even of rhythm and timbre as a music box would be.

The instrument itself was made of a small, flat piece of wood four or five inches square, with eleven metal prongs attached to it, arranged in two rows across two bridges. The melon rind acted as a resonator for the prongs, which were of different sizes and, when plucked, vibrated and rang like bells, in a scale which was not the octave and which I have never heard before. The name of the instrument is *te k'na*, and I believe that it is not native to Bushmen but traded from the Bantu people. Many Bushmen have them, though: Bushmen like music of any kind.

264 Soon the cornmeal was ready and we served it to the visitors on pieces of bark, in bowls formed from halves of tortoise shells, in tsama rinds. Bushmen have very little liquid food that does not come in its own natural container, and therefore they do not provide themselves with bowls. The [145 177] bowls they do have, carved from wood—an art learned from the Bantu people—are constantly in use as containers for small, loose objects, such as seeds or unstrung beads. Since the cornmeal was hot and runny, the people had some difficulty eating it with their fingers, but they got it down, the women hesitating a long time, watching the men, before they [609 538] dared to try it. I think they were afraid it would harm them, as I have heard many Bushman stories of strangers who poison tobacco or food. When they had eaten their servings and 264 609 578 found that they did not die, they had more, a morsel at a time. We might have presented the pot to let the people help themselves, but by now we knew better. Bushmen expect

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each other to share, yet in strange situations they sometimes distrust each other, and it was always better for us to assume the blame for any inequality, real or fancied, than to make people quarrel. Bushmen are very quick to blame; yet also in their hearts they want everything to work out smoothly, and are therefore also quick to forgive, especially strangers who know no better.

Although he was hungry, Gai refused to eat, preferring to play the te k'na instrument while watching the food vanish into the mouths of others rather than arouse more jealousy. That day he ate nothing but the bite of biscuit in the morning and a root at night. When the pot was empty, the man who had been laughing seized it and scraped its sides with a stick, eating and dividing the burned, hard crust. The newcomers acted badly, but this would not have been so if Gai had not arrived with us.

The sun was in the zenith, and we felt we had to go in order to be in camp before night. We were faced with the problem of what to tell the newcomers. They would surely want to come with us, but our supplies would not sustain eighteen more people, and if they came they would disrupt the harmony with their jealousies. Ukwane and Gai would be forced to share what we gave them, which was only enough for themselves and their families. No one would have enough, yet no one would leave; so before we left we explained to the newcomers that we could not take them with us because we did not have enough food to feed them or enough water for them to drink. "We hear you," they said.

We were about to leave when Gai came forward with his arm around the shoulders of the young, unmarried man and said that we had to bring this boy with us. We said that we would. "Because he is my son," Gai added.

We were very surprised, for they seemed to be almost the

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●609 same age, yet we learned later that it was so. We asked the boy to come into the jeep, which he did, watched by the others. We gave everyone a present of a large handful of tobacco, and drove over the burned grass, more crowded even than we had been before.

522 On the way home we saw and shot a springbok, as there was no meat left in camp. The bullet hit the springbok in the stomach and partly eviscerated him, causing him to jump and kick before he finally died. The Bushmen thought that this was terribly funny and they laughed, slapping their thighs and kicking their heels to imitate the springbok, showing no pity at all, but then they regard animals with great detatchment. When the springbok died we tied him to the front of the jeep and drove on. The radiator boiled all the way, causing the body to decompose. Drops of blood and drops of moisture from the springbok blew back over us, mixed with the reek of decay and with a cloud of flies which we drove too slowly to escape, and which, spattered as we were, became very attracted to us. Only the Bushmen remained in good spirits, as they were pleased to see the meat and pleased with the amusement the springbok had given them.

522 224 On the way we saw an enormous hole in the earth, dug by an aardvark months ago. We stopped, and the Bushmen on their hands and knees crawled into it until all three were out of sight. After a while they backed out, one by one, reported that it was a very big hole indeed, and got back into the jeep. But before we could drive away Witabe jumped out again. He had noticed a mound of grass which looked like a haystack, it was so big, as high as a man's knees and as broad as it was tall. It was, said Gai, built by a mouse, a kind of nest, and at Witabe's request he got on top of it and jumped up and down to frighten out whatever lived inside. He was right: presently a mouse did come rushing out to vanish im-

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and leafy green vegetables that taste like rhubarb, have not grown in yet; and so the Bushmen must go thirsty. People have died of thirst in these false seasons.

Gathering veld food is the work of the Bushman women, and I used to go with them quite often on their trips. We sometimes stayed in the veld all day eating roots instead of drinking water. One day my brother came along to film the gathering of veld food, and as we were getting ready to leave, Gai also joined us. It is customary for Bushmen never to let a group of their women go anywhere with a Bantu or a European man unless a Bushman man goes with them to protect them. Gai sauntered along behind us in his role of guardian, quite unhampered, as he had nothing with him but his loincloth. Dasina, Twikwe, and Tsetchwe walked in front, each with a digging-stick thrust in her belt like an enormous knife, each wearing a heavy cape, and Tsetchwe carrying her baby, who rode, carefree and swinging his feet, on her shoulder. John and I walked in the middle of the procession, and at the end came the three young boys, who did not stay in single file but ran all over the veld, ran circles around us, and shouted to each other happily.

We walked across the pan of Ai a ha'o through the fine, soft grass, which left tiny, barbed seeds sticking to our legs. We walked through the brush on the opposite side and then over a wide plain, where we saw a herd of wildebeest. No one was armed, and when the wildebeest saw us, put down their heads, and ran, we could only watch helplessly as all that meat galloped away.

We walked until we came to a patch of tsama melons, perhaps twenty of them lying together, shiny, smooth, and green in the grass. The vine that once had nourished them had dried away and already some of the melons were turning yellow, overripe, ready to open and release their seeds.

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888 The old people, the survivors, had not expected to outlive
764 their children and grandchildren, and then they had to bury
731 them; they had scooped shallow graves for them and had placed their bodies inside, then had covered the graves with branches. The old people had then lived by the graves for months to mourn and to protect the corpses from marauding animals. It had been a ghastly season, a season of carnage, and the old people did not like to think about it even now. We watched their sad faces when they spoke of it and saw that these old people themselves felt death very near, foreseeing the day when Gai would leave them, when the melons would dry, when they would starve.

Suddenly, unnoticed into the midst of this discussion came the baby Nhwakwe, having been awakened by the voices, his eyes still filled with sleep, to put an empty vegetable husk on the head of his grandmother, Dasina. She was too de-
[158] pressed to notice, though, and presently the husk fell off and Nhwakwe stumbled back to his sleeping-place, secure between his father and his mother, as though perhaps he had not fully awakened at all.

888 Dasina was speaking. She said again: "To die is bad, but
761 in the end we all die anyway," and Ukwane said he did not expect to live another season. Then he asked us when we would have to leave. We told him that we were leaving in a very few days, and he said he was sorry to hear it, but if we liked he would come back to our country with us to tell us everything he knew about the customs of the Gikwe. We told
● 609 him sadly that this would not be possible, and he said that in that case he would live out his life beside our track, waiting for the day when we would return. We told him not to do even that, for European farmers would surely follow our tracks into the desert looking for Bushmen to take as servants.

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GiKwe

"I hear you," said Ukwane, "but I would still like to go with 609
you to your country."

We told him then that we lived so far away and over so much water that if he went there he could never get back, and we said that even if he did go he might find that the longing of his heart to be back among his own people would be worse to suffer, harder to bear, than even hunger and thirst. "That is true," he said. "Perhaps."

That night we had, of course, not wanted to ask about the 761
customs and beliefs of Gikwe Bushmen concerning death; we wanted very much to know, but that night the people were grieved and with Bushmen death is always a bad subject. Another day, however, Ukwane and Dasina did tell us their funeral customs, which were similar to those of the 764
Kung, though not as elaborate. We learned that the Gikwe 184
dig a grave with digging-sticks, then bind the body with the arms crossed over the chest, the knees raised and bound, the ankles tied together, and the head resting on the fists, which are drawn up to the chin. The body is then wrapped in an old kaross and placed in a sitting position in the grave, braced upright by a forked stick. Each person present throws a handful of earth into the grave to "make the person remember them" and also to make the spirit go peacefully away. The grave is then filled up and covered with thorn branches to protect the dead person from wild animals, for a hyena will sometimes unearth a corpse.

While performing a funeral, and from the time of the fu- 764
neral on, the Bushmen always stay upwind from a grave, for 775
after death the spirit blows down the wind and will be harmful to the living. Gikwe Bushmen remain by a grave for at least three months—three moons, or longer—before they

The Dancers
Later, when the young boys had dispersed to play horse and 137
rider, Ukwane took his bow and played a few songs. He 533
played "Bitter Melons" again, and "A Song of Shouting," and one other song about Kutera, his wife. Both the last song and its subject were very simple, the song itself having only three or four notes and a gentle rhythm. It was composed by Ukwane one chilly night because he had asked Kutera to gather firewood during the afternoon, but she had refused. That night Ukwane had been cold because there was no fire.

Ukwane sang and played in the shade of a tree, and over his head the birds in the branches were also singing. Everything seemed very peaceful, very quiet under the hazy sky; the west wind moved the grass, yellow as young wheat, and blew the sounds of people speaking, the sounds of the young boys playing, and the fragrance of the great veld over us. The strain among the people seemed to have gone; they had held a dance together, their children were playing calmly; there was, for a time, enough to eat, as the gemsbok had not yet been quite devoured; and all these things seemed to relax the people, allowing them to see each other in more favorable lights. Their naps and their soft singing showed their relaxation, and we were glad, for we had become so fond of Ukwane and his people that we did not like to think of them abandoned by the Okwa people or involved in strife.

We were loading our trucks because we planned to leave before dawn. At the end of the afternoon all the Bushmen had drifted into our camp to watch us, and Tsetchwe helped 752
me pack. I cut my finger on the sharp edge of a box and when she saw me trying to wipe the blood away she told me to wait, so I did, and when the blood was dry she scratched it all off with a stick.

We gave her presents, and presents to all the people there. 609
We gave blankets to the people in Ukwane's band, long 123
strings of white beads to everyone, metal to makes knives or

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609 spearheads, tobacco and pipes, salt and candy and all the
123 water their containers would hold, all they could drink, and even enough water to wash in, for we had enough to take us to a waterhole a few hundred miles away where we could fill our drums. They did wash. Gai washed his whole body and
[142] emerged a shining gold. The others washed their arms and
[834] faces, modesty preventing their washing the rest, leaving them with golden arms and oval golden masks.

Tsetchwe was pleased with her presents—she hung her white beads in her hair and wrapped herself in the blanket, which, she said, was far softer than leather and which would not get stiff in the rain—but she did not seem happy. She spent the evening sitting beside me, for though we could not talk much with each other I knew that she liked me. "I will cry when you are gone," she said.

576 The two horses, formed by the six young boys, came pranc-
526 ing by, the riders riding loosely, the front feet of the horses galloping but the hind feet, because of the heavy load, trotting up and down. One horse disintegrated in front of us and the young boys who had formed it came forward slowly. The rider, a young boy from Okwa, seemed to want to ask me something. He was very shy, but finally he mustered his courage. "Are you a woman?" he said.

576 Ordinarily, he would have been too polite to ask a personal question, something which Bushmen almost never do because to them asking questions implies distrust, but it may be that on the day before our departure he had found his curiosity impossible to resist. Tsetchwe frowned at him, but I said: "Yes, I am."

The horse had been arguing with the rider, and the two boys who had been the front and hind legs seemed quite triumphant. "We told you so," one said.

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136 tle feather boas around their waists, which were the wings.

As we left the pan a boar got up from the grass where he was lying and ran before us, a warthog with a heavy neck and red bristle of a mane, with curved tusks and with his tail stiff up in the air like a banner, trotting like a horse. He held his head high and ran away proudly, and he was old and very massive for a pig.

Not long after that we saw the two thatched rooftops of the village of Gam. A feather of smoke was rising over the rooftops, and soon we were there.

648 609 The people must have heard our trucks. A small crowd was standing in the bushes, the people watching apprehensively as we came up. Mostly they were Bushmen, naked and smooth and brown, but here and there we saw a Bushman man wearing a ragged shirt or a woman in an old, filthy dress. In the crowd, towering over the Bushmen, were the Chuanas, a woman and a man, the woman dressed in a turban and a long dress, the man in shorts and a jacket. These two were the cattle-keepers. When our trucks stopped, the woman recognized us and, clapping her hands together, ran forward to meet us, followed at once by several Bushmen who also recognized us, and after that the crowd broke and all ran forward, the tense looks of apprehension gone, for if all the Bushmen had not known us they had heard of us and knew who we were. In a moment we found ourselves in the center of the crowd as all the Bushmen who knew us threw their gentle arms around us, touching us so lightly that it was like being embraced by moths. All those who did not know us crowded to look at our faces, and everyone talked at once until our ears rang. The Chuana couple, both more reserved, held back until the others had greeted us and then came forward to shake our hands.

621 When the excitement had died a little and everyone had a

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888 621 respect. In his family, the old man decided where the band would live.

157 Lazy Kwi's sister-in-law was called "the old woman." Her name referred not to her age but to her bearing and her personality, for she was outspoken, positive, and sure, qualities that are seldom found in young Bushmen.

609 She was not at all surprised to see us. She took my ear to turn my head, and kissed me on the cheek. Lazy Kwi laughed when he greeted us, showing a gap in his mouth where a tooth was missing, and called me his wife, a joke among Bushman men, who pretend they will marry any woman who is not a tabu relative. His baby hugged my legs and showed a huge white smile, then held up his arms to be lifted. He had grown so that I could hardly get him off the ground.

586 159 Many Bushmen who greeted us had been at Gam when we had lived there, and among them was a young girl whose name was Ungka, a very common name; as she had no distinguishing nickname, we called her Beautiful Ungka, for so she was. She was probably the most beautiful girl in all Nyae Nyae, and even though she was only sixteen years old she already had a flaming past. When she was ten she was married to a man much older than herself, but, young as she was, she knew what she wanted, and because the old man filled her with loathing she cut off all her hair and all her ornaments, rubbed ashes on her face until she was filthy, and swore she would stay that way until her marriage was dissolved. Of course it wasn't long before her husband and her parents complied with her wishes and she became single once again.

583 159 When she was about thirteen she attracted the attention of another much older man who was already married but who became so inflamed by her beauty that he begged her parents to give her to him as a second wife. This time her parents consulted with her, entreating her to marry him as

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When we met her at Gam we noticed that she had begun to walk like a beauty, proudly and aloof, but she was only sixteen and soon her reserve broke and she was very friendly, happy to see us, and we noticed then that her husband was not with her and was nowhere to be found. In fact, as we looked at all the faces, we saw that many people who should have been there were not. We asked for this person and that person, and the two Chuanas, instead of answering, invited us to their house where we could talk. My mother, my brother, myself, and Ledimo, the interpreter, who had been with us before and had been almost suffocated by the demonstration of affection he had received, walked to the village of Gam while the rest of the expedition went on to make camp.

The village of Gam was more peaceful than ever. We first went through a tiny gate in the high fence of cut thorn bushes which surrounded the village, put up to keep the cattle safe from the lions and other wild creatures at night, then past the ten or fifteen Bushman scherms that housed serf Bushmen, to the central part of the village where the Bantu houses were. There had been two; now there were three, but one was unfinished, and this was a large square dwelling with a window and a door. The other two houses—occupied by the two Chuana couples—were round, built of mud plaster, and had great thatched roofs but no windows, only doors. A thorn bush had been pulled into one of the doors, intended to keep the dogs and goats of the village from walking inside, a sign that the owners planned to be away for a long time. Gourds with milk in them hung from the roofpole of the other house; leaning against the wall was a basket of souring *muhengo* grain. The Chuana woman was brewing beer. A goat had been butchered and skinned and hung from a tree by one hind foot, and the sunlight shone red through it like sunlight shining through an ear.

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609 The Chuana man went into the house and brought out two chairs made of poles and thongs in imitation of European chairs but much smaller. He and my mother sat in these while John, Ledimo, the Chuana woman, and I, being young people, sat on the clay ground. Presently the Chuana man began to speak, saying he hoped we had come well.

My mother asked for his cattle, how they were, and his goats, if they had increased, how the rains and crops had been, and if he had heard about the water in Lake Ngami, which he had. My mother said: "Time must have stood still here. No one looks a bit older."

"Yes," he said. "We get sick sometimes, but we have not changed."

But things had changed; it came out that their son, the other Chuana couple, two entire bands of Bushmen whom we had known at Gautscha, and many Bushmen from Gam, including the husband of Beautiful Ungka, had been taken away by Europeans to work on the farms. Three times European farmers had come, having followed in the tire tracks we ourselves had left behind the last time. They came all the way to Gam, where they had found the Bushmen, no longer shy of Europeans, and had "offered to take them for a ride on their trucks but had promised to bring them back." The Bushmen had believed them, had gone for the ride, and of course were never seen again. That is why Gam seemed so peaceful, so empty, and the people so lonesome and sad. The worst of it was that families had been separated, both between Gam and the farms and between different farms.

One group of farmers had taken some young Bushman children who had been playing in the veld. When the mothers had called their children and had got no answer, then had looked in the veld and found their children gone, they had walked in the tracks the trucks had left to follow their chil-

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dren to the farms. The mothers and the children had never returned.

The farmer who had taken the Chuana couple's son had offered him food and clothes but no wages. When his mother had refused to let him go, the farmer had told her that she herself would have to leave Gam and move to Bechuanaland (there has always been a dispute about the border between the two countries, which affects the Chuana people who try to move across). The woman, assuming that the farmer was a government official, had been too frightened by this threat to prevent her son from leaving. She had been building a large new house, even planning to put a pane of glass in the little window, but she had been too discouraged to finish it, believing that she would have to leave it soon.

It was extremely sad to sit there talking about such things. The Chuana man held his head in his hands and his wife was almost crying, and it seemed very empty and lonely there on the hot gray ground with flies all around us in the air and birds flying above.

When we went back to our camp it was already dark and we found that Lazy Kwi, his wife, and all her family had moved in beside us to be near us. They seemed rather cheerful because they were all together, and they expressed their optimism by burning an entire log. This is prodigal for Bushmen, who usually burn just one small stick at a time, or at most the end of a small log, letting the fire work up the log by inches. The people sat with their legs stretched out, allowing the fire to warm them, and in the firelight their skins seemed blood red, all except Lazy Kwi, whose skin was as dark as the night. Lazy Kwi was always changing color. When we first had met him we had thought he must be the darkest-skinned Bushman anywhere, but this was only so because he had rubbed himself all over with medicine paste and the

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since that was all he remembered we went on again to the source of the first of the three fires.

It was there that we found Toma. He had been there all the time, only a few miles from where we had camped, and when he heard our jeep coming he watched us over the top of a bush before showing himself to see first who we were.

We saw him when he ran toward us. He was quite far off and we saw first his dark figure detach itself from the bush and run with long, swinging strides toward our jeep. He waved his arms and we knew at once that this, at last, was Toma. Before he reached us a second figure appeared from behind another bush and ran beside him, and we knew from the disjointed stride that this second man was Gao Big Feet, Toma's brother-in-law. We turned our jeep toward them and soon we met and the two men embraced us and laughed and said that they had known we would come back someday, and then they climbed in the jeep and took us to their werf, stopping first to get their spears and quivers, which they had left in the bushes, for no Bushman, no matter how excited, ever greets people with his weapons on his back because this might be taken as a sign that he was quarrelsome, looking for a fight.

Their werf was in a tiny thicket of thorn trees at the edge of the plain, screened in front by bushes, carefully concealed, but on a rise of ground where a man standing could easily scan the surrounding plain without being seen himself. There Toma and Gao Feet could observe the movements of the antelope that crossed the plains below them, waiting patient in the dappled shade of their trees' broad leaves as lions do. The two families stood in front of their bushes to meet us and they, too, embraced us and they all climbed in the jeep to do this, then climbed out again and stood back to see how we were.

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361 We got out and sat with them in their werf to talk before deciding what we would do next. Looking around, we saw that only the two families lived here, for there were only two sleeping-places, set, for the sake of a little privacy, on the opposite sides of one of the scrawny trees. The women had not built huts, but had scooped little hollows for themselves and their husbands which they had lined with soft grass bedding, and had put up two arching sticks at each of these hollows to mark the place where the door would be if a scherm had been there, for the Kung as well as the Gikwe need a sense of place. In fact, the Kung need it even more, for without their grass and marking-sticks the Kung feel homeless. Their sleeping hollows were like the soft grass nests of pheasants, hidden in the leaves.

276 576 The Bushmen all lit pipes and passed them—each pipe reached everybody, everybody shared and smoked, and the pipes circled slowly for an hour or more until the tobacco was gone. There was a brass pipe made of an old cartridge, a bone one, a horn one, and last of all a copper one that tasted very bad. The Bushmen cracked roasted tsi nuts and passed the fat little kernels around to each other, offering them on the palms of their hands. My brother told Toma that he had missed tsi because there was none in America.

"What?" said Toma. "No tsi? Why didn't you plant some?"

"The soil is a little strong for it," said John.

"So."

"But tsi is good."

"No good," said Toma sadly. "I used to be fat. Now I am thin." He stuck out his leg and slapped at it. "Where is my fat?" he said.

He did not seem to be thinner than he used to be, though; he had only a scar on his belly and a scar on his back where

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the buffalo's horn had wounded him. Otherwise, he looked very well. All the people seemed well, especially the children. Toma's oldest son wore a crown of badger skin with the long hair standing up on it, and two safety pins that we had given him, which he wore as earrings in his pierced ears. With all this he looked bold as a pirate. His brother was nearly as big as he was, and his sister, Norna, now three, was a slender, graceful child who regarded the world with dark, wondering eyes.

Norna's sixteen-year-old uncle, Tu's brother, was there too. He was a lame boy; he had been crippled in one leg since childhood and could hobble only with the help of a long stick. People had despaired of him, believing that he would never be able to hunt and therefore never marry or inherit the headmanship of Gautscha Pan, but when we saw him now and looked at him closely we noticed a fine row of scars between his eyes and on his arms and chest and we knew that he had hunted and killed an antelope and had been scarified in his initiation. We had planned on this trip to give him presents of all kinds, to make him rich, so that he could marry whether he could hunt or not, but we saw now that this would not be necessary. When he knew that we had noticed his scars he told us in great detail the story of the hunt. He told us how he had gone out with a group of hunters, how he had first seen the two horns of a kudu above a clump of bushes, how he had silently hobbled near it, propped himself on his crutch, and shot it with a poisoned arrow. The arrow had penetrated deeply and the lame boy had returned to tell the others. They had followed it with him for a day and in the evening had found it dead. It was the lame boy's kudu, though; he shot it, and to Bushmen that is the important thing. He was scarified with a paste made of the kudu's meat, and ever after that he was a man.

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from the foreheads of the antelope they kill and fashion them into bracelets which their wives wear on their arms. Short Kwi's wife and daughter wore dozens of these; their arms were covered and heavy with them. Short Kwi himself wore no ornament of any kind, nothing except a crown of badger hair which he owned for a while but later gave to Toma, the very crown that Toma's son now wore.

One day, said Toma, Short Kwi had been walking in the veld and had failed to watch where he was going. He had stepped on the tail of a puff adder, which had risen up and bitten his leg, just below the knee. It was a rare and terrible accident; in all the time we had been in the Kalahari we had known of only two people besides Short Kwi who had been harmed by snakes—a young boy bitten by a mamba who had died the day he was bitten, and a young woman who had been pulled into a waterhole by a water python and had drowned. Usually, snakes move away when you come near them, or if they don't, you can usually see them; but you can't walk with your eyes on the ground all the time, especially if you are hunting, as Short Kwi had been. His misfortune was regarded as a horrible accident and it was felt that the spirits of the dead were to blame. They had led Short Kwi down the very path the puff adder had chosen, and perhaps had even placed the snake where his foot was sure to fall. Toma and Goa Feet were very depressed to think of it. Although the talk turned to other things, Gao Feet mentioned the accident again and again; everything seemed to remind him of it. At last Toma said to us: "Perhaps you can help him hunt again. Since he was bitten his people have had no meat."

Toma told us that he had been with Short Kwi near Nama Pan when the third group of white farmers had arrived. The farmers had looked at Short Kwi and had offered to cut his leg off for him then and there. This had frightened the Bush-

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men so badly that they had fled in all directions into the veld and the white farmers had not recruited any labor. We wondered how Short Kwi had managed his escape and Toma told us that his brothers-in-law had helped him. They had carried him on their backs to a far place, taking turns.

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namesake of Dikai, I had acquired her set of relationships and was expected to follow the rules that applied to her. I could act in a familiar way with those people whom she treated familiarly and was expected to avoid those whom she avoided. I called Dikai "Big Name," the term usually applied in such a relationship, she called me "Little Name," her nephews called me "Aunt," her mother called me "Daughter," and often her husband, Gao Feet, with roars of laughter, would say he would marry me someday.

We sat down in the werf in the delicate shade of the arching branches and Dikai's mother produced a bag full of tsi nuts, which the people began to roast and eat. The bag was made of the entire skin of a duiker—a little nocturnal antelope no bigger than a small dog—turned inside out with the legs tied together as handles, the neck tied off as the bottom of the bag and the rump open as the top. When it was full of tsi it was solid and formed and looked eerily like a little, headless duiker.

When the day was over and the sky was getting dark I made a camp for myself a few feet from the werf. The Bushman children helped me pull the grass. We built a fire in our clearing and I cooked some beans and tsi nuts that Dikai's mother had given me for myself and the children, and as Bushmen from the werf began to come over I cooked more and more. There wasn't much—the Bushmen had only half a day's supply and we hadn't expected to be away from camp so long. Everyone had a little, though, and afterward we filled ourselves up with water and we smoked. It was very cold. Before the night was over, the water we had in our water pail had turned to ice. On nights such as this the Bushmen prefer to sit up and talk, to keep their minds off the fact that the air is cold and they are naked and hungry, rather than to try to sleep; they wait to sleep the following day, warm in the sun.

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574 by now, cranky from the long ride; the bundles of tsi were unloaded, the bundles of belongings, and Tu's grass bed. Lazy
361 Kwi went off to find his wife and family, but the others, all
574 Toma's people, looked around for a place to live and finally chose a tall tree, where they dropped their bundles and began to clear grass. In a very short time the werf was ready, fires were lit, tsi was roasting, and several of the Bushmen who had watched us come had gathered there to see if they should have a share of the tsi. Of course everybody got some and then sat down to eat it, burying the nuts in the hot ashes and scooping them out again with a stick when they were done.
252 Dikai gave some tsi to me and said that I could use her fire, a
576 courtesy, so I buried the nuts in the ashes and when I thought they were done I poked for them with a stick but I couldn't find them. Pretty soon they began to explode with loud reports and puffs of gray ashes which showed where they were, but of course then it was too late. You might as well throw them away if you forget where they are, the Bushmen say.

252 Some of the newcomers were eating giraffe hide, roasting great pieces of it, dried and thick and curling; they passed chunks of it around and it looked like the soles of shoes, all that remained of a giraffe hunted long ago. When it was roasted the people put it in a wooden mortar and pounded it into powder, and then licked the powder off their palms. Again, Dikai gave some to me and I found that it was salty and not unpleasant, tasting like bacon.

201 Gao Feet plucked my elbow and when I turned to him he
576 pointed at Dikai, sitting on the other side of the fire. He had pointed his lips at her, pushing his lips forward and gesturing with his chin because Bushmen think it is rude to point with the finger. "She wants to tell you what is in her heart," he
601 said. I looked at Dikai and she passed her hand over her two sons' eyes, first Little Gashe, then Little Dabe, as they slept

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beside her, and I remembered the eye medicine I had promised to her, so I nodded and went to get it, but when I returned with it I found that she had mistakenly awakened her sons and they now crouched behind her, peering out at me, their small faces distorted with distrust and apprehension. I held out my hand to Little Gashe, but he retired completely behind his mother, pushing Little Dabe out the other side, so I held out my hand to Little Dabe, causing him to shrink back, pushing Little Gashe. Finally Dikai stood up and left them both exposed, and then Gao Feet held Little Gashe, Dikai held Little Dabe, and I put the medicine in as quickly as possible, but both children had tantrums of rage and arched their backs, and as soon as they were released they would have nothing further to do with their parents, but went to sleep at their grandmother's fire instead, on the opposite side of the werf. The light was very dim, only the stars were showing and the fires had died, and these two forlorn children made two red little shapes as they lay down at their grandmother's fire; their skins reflected the red glow of coals, for they lay right in the ashes for warmth; they had forsaken their parents' karosses and there was no room for them under their grandmother's—another child was sleeping there.

Gao Feet gave up trying to urge them to come home and at last he, too, lay down to sleep, snug between his two wives, who were resting, not sleeping, for whenever someone at one of the other fires said something of interest, one or the other of them would put up her head and remark upon it. Tu slept alone with her children, for Toma had gone visiting, and one by one the people at Tu's fire moved away toward their own werfs, calling to each other in the dark. At last only a few voices were heard at one of the werfs; they seemed very gay and very lighthearted, all talking at once, and now and then Toma's voice was heard above them all. Hearing him, Tu

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together in front of the truck and when we climbed down they embraced us.

We went on toward the werf with these men and boys clinging to the sides of the truck and laughing loudly at those among them who were raked by thorn branches that the truck drove through, and at the edge of the werf we saw the women standing all together, waving and calling to us, and we stopped again and they too embraced us and kissed me, and the little children gravely shook my hand.

Short Kwi's mother-in-law was there with a wide and toothless smile, her face all wrinkled like a little shriveled pear, and many other people, among them the old man who had never shot a buck and whose sister had died in the forest; he now was nobody's close relative and we noticed he had lost an eye and seemed even more malevolent and sad. He greeted us distantly, but the others were enthusiastic. The little children tried to climb on me and finally someone put a baby in my arms. The baby bit me, but he meant me no harm, for when he bit I felt the sharp edge of a new tooth coming, which probably itched.

We passed through the bushes and came into the werf, where the people had obviously been living for a long time, judging by the size of the ash heaps at the fires and the depth of the nests that people had dug for themselves. Looking around, it came to us that many people whom we had expected to see were not there, Short Kwi for one, and his wife. When we asked for them, Short Kwi's brother-in-law said that he would take us to see him presently. When we asked for the others who were missing—among them the man with two wives named Kushe and two daughters named Xama—we were told that these people had all been taken by the farmers and had never been seen again. We were very sad to hear it, for many of them were too old to have to do the heavy

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431 867 869 578 talked about always; Bushman children listen for hours to discussions of this kind and thereby know the history of every object, every exchange between their families, before they are ten or twelve years old. A debt unpaid is a sword against the debtor, to be used against him any time, for any reason. Jealousy and spite had surely preyed on the old woman's mind when she had started this discussion, for she had got up to seek out Gao Feet very early, just at dawn.

578 609 In the end, the argument was concluded and the crowd scattered by us when we told Short Kwi that we were ready to take him to the hospital in Windhoek if he would go. He said he would, and the people, glaring bitterly at him, at each other, and at us, stood up and went to their scherms, saying to the other members of their families what they would have said to their opponents if they had had a chance.

Soon Short Kwi's werf was nearly empty. The only people who remained were Short Kwi, his family, ourselves, Toma, and Gao Feet. These two talked together, vindicating themselves, and then, before long and before we had a chance to discuss our plans to move Short Kwi, some of the people who had been on Gao Feet's side in the argument came back and crouched beside us stolidly, waiting to hear what might now be said. Jealousy had been aroused.

609 Because of the long journey and Short Kwi's condition, we thought that it would be best for him to leave at once, but his wife spoke out against this, saying that the rest of her family, probably at this moment on their way here, would be heartbroken to find them gone. She would like to wait for them, she said, to say good-by. Gao Feet agreed with her. He added that if her mother were to come and find her gone the old woman would cry and cry for days, but Toma shook his head. "Perhaps Short Kwi can be helped," he said. "Perhaps

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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he had better go anyway. The old woman will just have to cry."

Short Kwi's wife began to put her things in a skin bag. She seemed to be resigned. Short Kwi did not say a word, but he smiled, and he seemed to be in good spirits, ready for whatever might happen to him.

Short Kwi's wife called her daughter and when her daughter came she took one of the child's arms; another woman took the other, and together they stripped off every ornament the daughter wore, every bead string in her hair, every band of antelope skin on her arms, the great wealth of them that once had shown how Short Kwi had hunted, and they did it quickly, cutting some and pulling others although it hurt the little girl and she cried sadly. The two women piled the ornaments in a mound which grew higher and higher, to be left with Tu for safekeeping. Perhaps Short Kwi was resigned to leaving, but we thought then that his wife was not.

When the little girl's arms were stripped completely Short Kwi's wife let her go free to rub the pale stripes that the bands had left and to wipe away her own tears. Short Kwi's wife then stood up to ask us to feed her mother when she came. We said we would.

Everything had happened so quickly that we hadn't had a chance to think or plan, and when we looked at Short Kwi and his wife now and pictured them in the streets of Windhoek, we knew we had to do something, so my mother and I and our interpreter, Ledimo, took Short Kwi's wife aside so that no one would be embarrassed and told her everything we could imagine that she would have to know in order to take care of herself and Short Kwi in the city; we racked our brains and started with the simplest things. We taught her how to open a safety pin; we told her how to find a toilet and

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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609drew a picture for her of what a toilet would look like; we told her where she could get water and how to turn a tap, how to handle menstruation when she was alone in the city in the clothes of a European, without the absorbent leather strip that Bushman women use. We told her, in order that she might not seem strange and perhaps be the object of ridicule, to wash very often and to let her hair grow, for she had recently shaved the top of her head like a monk, very decorative among Bushman women. We told her that the traffic in the city streets could kill her, that she must be extremely careful, and we did not even venture into the subject of money, for she had never heard of such a thing and, although we could have taught her the denomination of coins, we could not think how to explain the system to her, how to tell her that Europeans keep tiny discs which possess a value beyond themselves, for Bushmen have no tokens of exchange.

We told her what clothes people wore, both men and women, from the inside out, that she must clothe herself and cover her breasts always or be stared at, which is abhorrent to Bushmen, and then at last we tried to tell her what a city was, what it would look like, what buildings were made of and what they were.

At the end we told her to remember everything we said, for very few Europeans or Bantus can speak the Kung language. This was her last chance to learn. She would hereafter be unable to ask.

After that we took her to our tents and dressed her, stripping her as she had stripped her daughter and giving her a set of clothing put together from what we had. I gave her a dress which I had brought with me to wear if ever, in our travels, I should need one. It was cotton and required very little ironing; she could wash it at night and wear it dry and quite smooth in the morning. It fitted her and became her—it was

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
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pink and made her skin look gold. My mother gave her under- 609
clothes and a bright bathrobe which my mother found hastily in our bundle of cloth that we intended to give away as gifts, the bathrobe intended to be cut into pieces as scarves for children, for we ourselves had no need of bathrobes in the desert. Short Kwi's wife could wear it while the pink dress dried. We sent a set of clothing out to Short Kwi, robbing my father and brother, and last of all we quickly made a little red dress for the daughter from more of our gift cloth, fitting it on her as she stood there, for we heard the truck motor starting and knew that we had very little time. All this we did in less than two hours.

When we came out of the tent we found ourselves in the middle of a crowd of women crouched together in a mass. Tu and Dikai were at the front, nearest to us, for they had been looking under the tent flap to see what we were giving Short 578
Kwi's wife and wondering, no doubt, if they would get the same. They glared at us when we came out, and Tu was yellow-eyed.

The truck was ready, Short Kwi was braced with grass and blankets comfortably on top. His wife tried uneasily to join him, her new skirt binding her legs badly, for the apron worn by Bushman women is supple and free, and falls between the legs when the woman is in motion. People boosted her; she finally got up, and reached out her arms to her daughter, who stood, a lonely baby, by the truck's great wheel, waiting to be seen, to be taken. Toma lifted the little girl and her mother caught her.

The motor had been running, and almost before we knew what had happened the truck had gone, had disappeared among the trees. The two, Short Kwi and his wife, had taken one last, desperate look at the veld, the werfs, and all the people, and their little girl had seemed frightened even though

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
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609 she was with her father and mother, though perhaps not nearly as frightened as she would be later when she was far away from Nama Pan in the streets of the city.

732 It was a very sad and heavy day the day that Short Kwi left. It depresses Bushmen terribly to see one of their number crippled, which, of course, in almost every case means the end of that person's productive life as a supporter of the people —one becomes a poor person and depends upon the enforced charity of one's near relatives while suffering avoidance by one's remoter kin; but it depresses Bushmen even more to see one of their number taken away. It is the end of a link in their unity, and when it happens part of the chain of their relationships, part of their pattern is destroyed. That day many people who surely expected never to see Short Kwi again stayed alone by their fires or played the guashi idly, but spoke not a word. The rest of the people, all but Toma, Gao
152 Feet, and Lazy Kwi, were beset with jealousy and quarreled
578 on and on all day, with us, with each other. They were jealous because we had given Short Kwi and his wife clothing and within the hour after Short Kwi's departure a crowd of people was squatting in the dust around our camp. The crowd was so thick that we could hardly get through. No one budged an inch to let us by, and when they would catch our eyes, the women, particularly those who had waited outside our tent when we had given Short Kwi's wife the clothes, pointed to holes and frayed spots in their karosses which clearly showed that they, too, needed clothing, and when we did nothing (we had presents of blankets, cloth, beads, shirts, pants, pipes, and knives to give to everyone when we left, but could not give dresses to all the women and could not give the presents now) they glared at us with stony faces and hard eyes.

152 In the afternoon the people were still there, quite dusty

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
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That was beautiful, the sun, and there was no sound as it 133
went down except the sound of doves calling among the trees on the far bank, whirring, cooing, a call that was pulsing and thick, urgent, throbbing, rising in intensity as the sun got dimmer, reaching a peak as the sun disappeared. It was as though they had brought it down, and when it was gone there was no sound at all; the silence was complete.

Gautscha Pan was more than a mile square and we, Europeans and Bushmen alike, held our breath with the majesty of it, its great solitude, the great drama of sunset going on reflected in its water for no eyes to look at; and when the sun was down and the colors of the veld were dull and dark we started home, but that was an impressive last look at a place and the last I ever saw of Gautscha Pan.

In the morning our trucks were packed and ready. We were 609 ●
not happy to leave and the Bushmen were not happy to have us go. We gave them presents of all kinds, presents of pipes, of knives, of beads, of clothing, of cornmeal and tobacco; and all this pleased them, but Dikai cried when we said good-by and asked me if I would ever come back. I said that I hoped so and she kissed me and I felt wet tears on her face.

The people who had come from Gam wanted to ride a 361
little way back with us to a mangetti forest, and we were glad to have them, but the others, Toma and his band, Gao Feet and his family, wanted to return to the tsi fields where we had found them, the veld food at Nama being almost gone, and before we left they had their bundles packed and were ready to go; as our trucks moved away they waved good-by and before we were out of sight we looked back and saw their small groups going in every direction, scattering to the four winds. When we reached the mangetti forest the others climbed

16: Lee E-5 (1963-1965) 1966 FX10 Bushmen FX10
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IX. FOOD, WORK AND LAND USE

AMONG THE !KUNG BUSHMEN

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An observer planning to live with Bushmen is led to expect - from the ethnographic literature - that the Bushmen lead an arduous and exacting way of life, in which the problem of getting food is an overwhelming daily concern. Furthermore I had been told, by local Europeans, that the Bushmen were extremely shy and difficult to find, and that they were always on the move in their endless quest for game. Therefore I was unprepared for the situation in the Dobe area when I first arrived there at the end of the dry season of 1963; for camped at every waterhole were dozens of Bushmen who offered the outsider a hearty welcome and who were seemingly unconcerned by the problem of finding food.

During the course of the study, it became apparent that the Bushman subsistence was more substantial and secure than had been previously supposed. In the foregoing chapters the properties of their hunting and gathering way of life have been described. It will be appropriate, in this final chapter, to review the lines of evidence that bear on the problem of how such a carefree and secure existence is possible in a society of hunter-gatherers living in a harsh, semi-desert environment.